Coalfield Area Committee – SIB Call for Projects, Digital Inclusion

Following approval of £100,000 at the June Area Committee to address Digital Inclusion, a project brief was developed by the People Board. A call for projects was made via the Coalfield VCS Network to support local residents to develop skills, access and engage with on-line services and facilities to improve their social outcomes across a broad range of themes, e.g. health, managing money, finding a job, accessing public services or simply socialising or shopping. After consultation and assessment, all information was considered and it is recommended that the following projects are approved from the previously allocated £100,000 SIB budget. Projects will commence in January 2018.

Large Project

Name of Organisation	Springboard Sunderland Trust
Title of Project	Coalfield Communities Connected - CCC
Full Cost of project	£100,000
Match Funding	£50,000
Total SIB requested	£50,000
When will the project start	January 2018 for two years

This project will increase public access to computers, raise awareness of services available within the Coalfield area and provide participants with appropriate training and qualifications to increase their individual digital skills.

A dedicated member of staff will be employed to lead the implementation of a Coalfield Digital Inclusion Steering Group involving all interested parties. Members of this group will ensure support and training developed is complimentary to the current local offer in order to reduce the risk of duplication or possible negative impact on any local organisations. This collaborative approach will ensure opportunities for innovative methods of delivery are identified and realised, utilising the skills already in place and supporting the successful applicants of the smaller call running alongside this project.

As part of the programme we will develop the role Digital Champions allowing local people who have participated within the programme or wish to help those to improve their skills, take a proactive role in supporting others in their community. As part of the steering group the staff member will be able to provide basic technical advice and support to participating groups and organisations. The wider Springboard staff team include qualified ICT specialist Tutors and a professional Digital Marketing Officer who will advise and support the steering group.

Supported by qualified staff, participants will receive information, advice and guidance (IAG) to identify what support they need and receive efficient signposting covering how and where to access services. This database of free services will be made available to anyone without charge and in a number of formats including electronic and hard copy.

Informal support provided by Springboard will include drop in sessions in the Springboard Community Hub previously the 'Hetton Centre Library', available over a minimum of 15 hours 51 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday. In addition participants will be able to access a weekly session provided by Springboard within the Houghton Jobcentre Plus site each Friday. Signposting will inform participants of other drop in sessions in partner sites, these additional sites and times will be agreed by the Steering Group to provide the best fit for local residents situated within the different Coalfields wards and supported by a Springboard Staff member where appropriate. Times and locations for drop in sessions will be advertised. Sessions will provide support on the basics of using a computer or digital device including tablets and smart phones, accessing the internet for online shopping or research for personal interest, sending emails, social media such as Facebook and Instagram, managing money online, staying safe online, access to GP services online and NHS choices and facilitating claimants entries onto Universal Jobmatch and Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS).

In addition to the informal support, timetabled programmes of study will be available allowing individuals to attend small group taught sessions.

By the end of the project the residents of the Coalfield area will be more informed about the range of

provision in the area, more confident to use IT equipment and on-line services and be equipped with the knowledge, qualifications and personal contacts to support others in their community who may not possess digital skills or the confidence to approach organisations.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
- Attend a joint induction meeting with other successful projects
- Support residents with On line completion of forms and applications e.g. Universal credit , and managing UC on line accounts
- Review progress, delivery and targeting as UC rolls out – taking account of available intelligence
- Facilitate Coalfield Digital Steering Group and support successful small projects
- Deliver an outreach service for an agreed number of hours per week in venues to be confirmed
- Ensure outreach support is offered in all wards
- Measure and report on key outcomes of project
- Involve the local community to ensure that the support is right for them
- Provide signposting to organisations that can help with other issues

Small Projects

Get Connected	ELCAP	£5,000

The project will offer weekly 'Get Connected' sessions by which we will support and train local residents to 'Get Connected.' Using the skills of our current staff team and volunteer base we will be able to offer support such as basic computer skills, use of comparison websites, online form filling, MS Office skills etc in order for our local residents to be better equipped for life in the digital age. We would look to gain support from local businesses to come and speak (eg Barclays - online security and More Than - form filling etc) so we covered as wide a range subjects as possible.

In order to minimise the barriers to anyone attending a session we will offer 2 x 2hr sessions a week (one during the day-time and we would extend the opening hours of ELCAP one evening a week) as well providing transport as and when it is required.

Part of the funding will be used to purchase laptops which will not be restricted for use at ELCAP. ELCAP could take the laptops and offer support to local residents in their own homes or sheltered accommodation units or partner organisation events. The project will share services and programme content with partners to ensure the sessions provided did not overlap or coincide with other sessions being provided in the Coalfields. The project would ensure that partners and residents were consulted to ensure that what is being provided in terms of support, workshops etc is what is really required and needed rather than just what we think may be needed.

Funding will pay for 3 laptops, transport for those who cannot access the service independently and contribution towards staff costs for the support sessions.

Recommendation: Approve with conditions
- Attend a joint induction meeting with other successful projects
- Engage with Coalfield Digital Steering Group and successful applicant of large project
- Measure and report on key outcomes of project (mid term and end project evaluations)
- Involve the local community to ensure that the support is right for them
- Provide signposting to organisations that can help with other issues
- Ensure adequate safety and security of equipment

Welcome Café	Hetton New Dawn	£3,930

Two Welcome Cafes will offer IT access, which will enable participants to do job search / complete online forms / contact support agencies / stay in touch with family etc. The project will have a minimum of five laptops available for use during the Welcome Cafe sessions at both the Apostolic Church in Easington Lane on Monday, and in Hetton & Eppleton Community Hall, Hetton on Friday. Free Wi-Fi will be available for users and sessions will run from 10am–12.30pm.

To improve the confidence of older members of our community the project will provide 10" tablets for members of lunch clubs/attendees at the cafes to use to access facilities like Sunderland Library's online provision. New Dawn, will have a group membership, so that residents can access the many services available. Access can also be used to support elderly residents to contact agencies/ companies to resolve issues, change suppliers and to contact family through use of email / Facebook / Skype. Support from an experienced tutor will also be available here.

Recommendation: Approve with conditions
- Attend a joint induction meeting with other successful projects
- Engage with Coalfield Digital Steering Group and successful applicant of large project
- Measure and report on key outcomes of project (mid term and end project evaluations)
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Computing in the Community	Penshaw CA	£5,000

Penshaw Community Association would like to offer access to computers and internet on a regular basis for members of all ages in the community. They are proposing opening a computer suite in the community centre to the public, three days a week for four hours, with technical support available one hour per session to assist with any enquiries or support in IT skills. All setting up and configuration/ testing/ quality control of the systems will be carried out by a member of the committee who is a qualified IT engineer.

Desk-top computers, a laptop (all with wifi access) as well as a printer, will be available for a variety of uses including, applying for benefits, job searches, producing and printing out CVs, homework assignments, shopping and finding local children's events and activities etc. These will be placed in a designated area for privacy when working. The Community Association will also make space available for people who would like to bring their own IT equipment in order to access our wifi in cases where they have not got this facility in their own homes. Depending on demand for this facility for homework and research, we will revise opening times to best suit the needs of our users.

The funding will provide 2 desktop PCs (including all essential requirements such as desks and chairs), 1 laptop, 1 printer, broadband set up costs and IT support.

Recommendation: Approve with conditions:
- Attend a joint induction meeting with other successful projects
- Engage with Coalfield Digital Steering Group and successful applicant of large project
- Measure and report on key outcomes of project (mid term and end project evaluations)
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Know IT All	ShARP	£4,950

This funding will provide some updated IT equipment in the EVH, provide drop in sessions to improve digital knowledge and skills for local people and improve access by providing a lap top in the new community library. ShARP currently has open access for digital provision (12 computers) with WiFi facility, open to all members of the public. Access to the EVH is for 37 hours per week with occasional evening or weekend opening. Older PCs will be replaced. The drop in sessions will be for 2 hours per week for 48 weeks, with a suitably qualified IT tutor, to encourage and support the use of IT for the individual's needs. The addition of a computer in the new library, will be beneficial particularly to the volunteers working in the library, as they will be able to assist customers to research books, access information etc. The current footfall is 40 -50 people per week which would be increased with this project.

The Know IT All project will provide new opportunities for volunteers through an IT buddy scheme where volunteers can train to support other users. This will enable sustainability at the end of the Know IT All project.

The funding will allow the project to renew 6 computers and provide an additional 48 supported sessions over a one year period.

Recommendation: Approve with conditions:
- Attend a joint induction meeting with other successful projects
- Engage with Coalfield Digital Steering Group and successful applicant of large project
- Measure and report on key outcomes of project (mid term and end project evaluations)
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	• Ensure adequate safety and security of equipment	
Space4 IT	**Space 4**	**£4,972**

The funding will be used to extend the existing Space 4 IT drop-in advice, thus increasing public access to computers, the internet and IT support/learning within a safe and caring environment, fully accessible and on one level. The project will:

- Provide the opportunity to learn IT skills and tackle issues of digital exclusion
- Provide access to the internet
- Support in applying for jobs online and writing CVs
- Carry out sessions on a variety of IT equipment: PC, laptops, tablets, smart phones, printers and scanners
- Help people develop new communication skills via email and Skype
- Teach internet/social media safety and personal protection
- Offer courses to extend knowledge of digital photography, social media, online shopping and financial management
- Provide a safe environment in which members can develop friendships enabling them to lead fulfilling lives in the community

SPACE4 has regular contact with significant numbers of people who are digitally excluded offering digital support, access and training and plans to extend this service by collaborating with partners to publicise Space4 and through direct referrals.

The funding would allow the project to train and employ a key worker to advertise and deliver regular sessions for either booked appointments or drop in advice. The funding will provide a contribution towards increasing opening hours, additional key worker hours, training, 2 tablets, one printer and 1 PC

Recommendation: Approve with conditions:
- Attend a joint induction meeting with other successful projects
- Engage with Coalfield Digital Steering Group and successful applicant of large project
- Measure and report on key outcomes of project (mid term and end project evaluations)
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IT Access and Training in New Herrington	**St Aidans Community Group**	**£4,855**

This project will allow for the purchase of 6 laptop computers and provide training for up to 30 local residents on how to safely use the internet, how to safely shop and compare prices online, how to avoid scams, how to use social networks, and how to search for jobs, increasing confidence in using IT. This project will support the Digital Inclusion Policy in the following ways:

- **Increased public access to computers**
  In addition to the weekly training sessions, local residents will be able to use the laptops and the community centre's internet connection several days every week, based on user-led demand from residents.
- **Improved access to internet services**
  As part of the project, a high-speed wireless internet connection will be installed within the centre.
- **Improved confidence amongst residents to use on line services**
  This project is more than just about providing access to IT equipment. We will also be providing structured and drop-in training and support to local residents.
- **Increased availability of IT equipment and support**
  We will buy 6 laptops and provide all relevant software for local residents. Training and drop-in support will be available for 40 weeks but the computers will be available for years to come.

Recommendation: Approve with conditions:
- Attend a joint induction meeting with other successful projects
- Engage with Coalfield Digital Steering Group and successful applicant of large project
- Measure and report on key outcomes of project (mid term and end project evaluations)
- Involve the local community to ensure that the support is right for them
- Provide signposting to organisations that can help with other issues
- Ensure adequate safety and security of equipment

A budget of £100,000 SIB was available for allocation. Projects above total £78,707. It is recommended that a 'health check' is carried out on the above small projects when they commence in order to identify any gaps or issues across the area. The results of this 'health check' will then be used to implement identified actions. It is recommended that the £21,293 is available to put in place additional measures to strengthen the digital offer across the Coalfield area, such as providing a 'mobile' outreach service and that the budget will be managed by the Coalfield Area Community Development Lead under the direction of the People Board.